

Media Ownership Further Notice Proposed Rulemaking  
Docket # 06-121

To the FCC,

This letter is written regarding the Dual Network Ban. Although there are some positives that could come from lifting the Dual Network Ban, the negatives outweigh the positives. The Dual Network Ban rule according to: (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/reviewrules.html>) states that the dual network rule originally prohibited any entity from maintaining more than a single radio network. A few years later, the rule was extended to television networks. Today, the dual network rule prohibits a merger between or among these four television networks: ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC.

What that statement tells me is that if this rule were to change, then it would lead to conflicts with other FCC rules such as Ownership Limits and Viewer Percentages. This would lead to big networks merging together and exceeding the limit of one television networks ownership. I am talking about owned and operated networks. The one major problem that is most important and concerns me is that if two powerhouse networks combined, this would lead to a monopoly. If a monopoly were to form, then a negative domino effect would occur within other major networks and smaller networks. Not only would it be a negative effect, but they would dominate the market and would most likely buy off the smaller networks. That would eventually lead to the two competing. A perfect example of a monopoly would be AT&T during the 1980's. AT&T was running a monopoly with the phone networks. The first erosion of this natural monopoly occurred in 1956 in the Hush-a-phone vs FCC. AT&T was the only major phone network, when it divided into more networks that are part of the Regional Bell Operating Companies. In December of 2006 the networks were all bought out by AT&T once again. Gradually AT&T has been buying out the little networks. The division of networks was working fine for about 20 years and with AT&T buying the networks out, the monopoly is occurring once again. More information can be found at ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AT%26T\\_%281885-2005%29#Divisions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AT%26T_%281885-2005%29#Divisions).)

The effect it would have on me personally is if they were to join, then I would lose the closeness of local television news, which I enjoy coming home to every night. The news would be limited because of the rule change, causing people to have less knowledge of what is going on so close to them. The news would be limited because of major network rules. The smaller companies have similar but different rules and regulations than major networks. With these rules and regulations comes more information and news more related to the community. With the major networks controlling

multiple television networks, they would limit the decision making process, because one person or a few people would be making the majority of the decisions. Whereas if they were smaller networks, they would have more people making decisions of what could and could not be aired. So not all viewing is the same throughout the nation. Also, the public view is going to be limited. An example would be how fox television is conservative and republican on most of their views. The nation would have little knowledge on what the democrats are saying about the certain political topic. If this were to happen, FOX News would become way too strong for other companies to even compete and the negative effect would begin. It has already happened to CNN and other related networks, because their credibility had diminished in recent years due to republicans and conservatives of networks like FOX News. Where more than 50% of FOX News viewers are Republican. This is a major increase from past years where it was in the range of 35% to 40% according to

<http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?reportid=215>.)

Going back to the monopoly issue, one network does not need to run the nation, because smaller companies would be bought out and turned into something the community doesn't want. The news would be broadcasted differently and the people would have no choice but to hear the other side of the issues, and not the side they want. If they were to combine, a lot of the time they won't show different stories due to the nature of it. For example the local television network may air a man being carried away on a stretcher because he was important to the county or community. But because it isn't a national story, it may go unaired. There is no reason for one or two people to make a decision on what is going to be aired nationally. If a local network wants to show local news, they should be able to. Combining networks is something that should be put to rest, and leave the networks the way they are. The more stations, the more news, the better.